Government of Himachal Pradesh on 1.2.2000 not to take any action contrary to the directions passed by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court has also taken cognizance of the above news and issued notice to the State of Himachal Pradesh in its order dated 14.2.2000. The Supreme Court has also given stay to the operation of any such order issued by the State Government on lifting of ban on felling of trees till further orders by the Court. This matter at present is subjudice.

Forest cover

925. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the total forest areas in the country at present, State-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that the forest cover in the country is decreasing;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the number of schemes launched and being implemented by Government for development of forests in the country, particularly in the NER?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) The State-wise forest area and forest cover in the country, as per State of Forest Report, 1997 is given in the Statement. *(See* below)

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The main reasons for reduction of forest cover in the country are increasing demand of forest produce for increasing human and cattle population, shifting cultivation, fire, grazing, illicit cutting, encroachment and lack of required investments in the forestry sector.

(d) Seven centrally sponsored schemes are being implemented by the Government for development of forests in the country out of which six schemes are also being implemented in the North-East Region. In addition, 18 externally aided forestry projects are being implemented in the country for the development of forests.

Statement

State-wise forest area and forest cover in the country as per state of forest report, 1997 (in sq. km.)

State/UT	Geographic area	Recorded forest*		Forest cover	
		Area	Per cent		Area Per cent
Andhra Pradesh	275,068	63,814	23.20	43,290	15.74
Arunachal Pradesh	83,743	51,540	61.54	68,602	81.9
Assam	78,438	30,708	39.15	23,824	30.4
Bihar	173,877	29,226	16.81	26,524	15.3
Delhi	1,483	42	2.83	26	1.7
Goa	3,702	1,424	38.46	1,252	33.9
Gujarat	196,024	19,393	9.89	12,578	6.4
Haryana	44,212	1,673	3.78	604"	1.4
Himachal Pradesh	55,673	35,407	63.60	12,521	22.5
Jammu & Kashmir	222,235	20,182	9.08	20,440	9.2
Karnataka	191,791	38,724	20.19	32,403	16.9
Kerala	38,863	11,221	28.87	10,334	26.6
Madhya Pradesh	443,446	154,497	34.84	131,195	29.6
Maharashtra	307,690	63,842	20.75	46,143	15.0
Manipur	22,327	15,154	67.87	17,418	78.0
Meghalaya	22,429	9,496	42.34	15,657	69.8
Mizoram	21,081	15,935	75.59	18,775	89.1

State/UT	Geographic area	Recorded forest*		Forest cover	
		Area 1	Per cent	Area 1	Per cent
Nagaland	16,579	8,629	52.04	14,221	85.8
Orissa	155,707	57,184	36.73	46,941	30.1
Punjab	50,362	2,901	5.76	1,387	2.8
Rajasthan	342,239	31,700	9.26	13,353	3.9
Sikkim	7,0%	2,650	37.34	3,129	44.1
Tamil Nadu	130,058	22,628	17.40	17064	13.1
Tripura	10,486	6,292	60.01	5,546	52.9
Uttar Pradesh	294,411	51,663	17.54	33,994	11.5
West Bengal	88,752	11,879	13.38	8,349	9.4
A & N Islands	8,249	7,171	86.93	7,613	92.3
Pondicherry	493	N.A.	N.A.	Nil	Nil
Chandigarh	114	31	27.19	7	6.1
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	491	203	41.34	204	41.5
Daman & Diu	112	N.A.	N.A.	3	2.7
Lakshdwcep	32	N.A.	N.A.	Nil	Nil
TOTAL	3,287,263	765,210	23.28	633,397	19.27